



I

MINEHEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR
1966

To the Minehead Urban District Council

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report for 1966 on the health of the Minehead Urban District.

The year was marred by the death in November of Dr. William Bain, who had been your Medical Officer of Health for 57 years. Dr. Bain succeeded Dr. Sanguinetti as your Medical Officer of Health in 1909 and his long record of service to the Authority is unique.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT

Area: 2,739 acres
Population: 7,400 (Registrar General's mid-year Estimate)
Rateable Value: £483,559
Sum represented
by a penny rate: £1,956

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the year

					<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Live Births:	Legitimate	..	..	..	82	35	47
	Illegitimate	..	..	..	9	5	4
Still Births:	Legitimate	..	..	..	-	-	-
	Illegitimate	..	..	..	1	-	1
Deaths from all causes		..	..	..	155	63	92
Deaths of Infants under 1 year			..	..	6	3	3
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population:					12.0		
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population:					20.9		

England and Wales

Estimated Mid-Year Home Population: 48,075,300 (Provisional data)

			<u>Number</u>	<u>Rate</u>
Live Births	..	..	850,000*	17.7 per 1,000 population
Still Births	..	..	13,300*	15.4 per 1,000 total births
Deaths	..	..	563,626	11.7 per 1,000 population
Infant Mortality (deaths under 1 year of age)	..		16,147	19.0 per 1,000 live births

* Estimated

Causes of Death

<u>Cause</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
11. Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	3	2	1
12. Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	6	-	6
14. Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	9	6	3
16. Diabetes	1	-	1
17. Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	34	10	24
18. Coronary Disease, Angina	25	16	9
19. Hypertension with Heart Disease	1	-	1
20. Other Heart Disease	28	7	21
21. Other Circulatory Disease	12	7	5
22. Influenza	1	-	1

/23. Pneumonia ...

<u>Cause</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
23. Pneumonia	10	4	6
24. Bronchitis	6	4	2
25. Other Diseases of Respiratory System	1	1	-
26. Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	-	1
29. Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	1	
32. Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	11	4	7
34. All Other Accidents	3	-	3
35. Suicide	2	1	1
Total	155	63	92

Climatic Conditions

Rainfall

Annual: 33.83 ins.
Average Yearly: 33.4 ins.
From 1st June to 30th September: 9.44 ins.
Days during period less than 0.01: 67
Days during period with 0.01 and 0.04: 15
Days during period more than 0.04: 40

Temperatures

Highest Air 78° F. 12th August
Lowest Air 27° F. 9th January
Lowest Air 34° F. 25th and 26th December
Lowest Air
(1st June-30th Sept.)
44° F. 19th September

It is a pity that a sunshine recorder is not available to record the hours of sunshine at a seaside resort.

Prevalence and Control over Infectious Disease

Notifiable Diseases

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Measles	34	13	21
Dysentery	1	-	1
Erysipelas	2	-	2
Tuberculosis, Respiratory	1	-	1

In June there was an outbreak of smallpox (variola minor) in Monmouthshire and a number of families from the area of the epidemic came over to stay at the Holiday Camp. On June 12th one family with two boys was sent home from the Camp, diagnosed as suffering from chicken pox. Both children were contacts of proven cases of variola minor and so prompt action had to be taken at the Camp whilst waiting for the diagnosis of chicken pox to be confirmed.

On June 20th I visited the Camp, together with the Regional Smallpox Consultant and one of the general practitioners in the town, to examine a child, aged six years, again from Monmouthshire, who had fallen ill with a rash. Fortunately the condition, once again, turned out to be chicken pox.

These two incidents were resolved satisfactorily but with the large numbers of visitors to the town, most of whom stay only a short time, there is a need for constant vigilance. I am happy to pay tribute to the excellent co-operation I received from the general medical practitioners and from the Management of the Holiday Camp.

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE DISTRICT

Home Nursing, Midwives and Home Helps

These services are provided by the Health Department of the Somerset County Council.

Hospitals

The Minehead and West Somerset Hospital is managed by the Bridgwater, Minehead and Butleigh Management Committee. The Hospital provides medical, surgical and casualty treatment and out-patient clinics. A Family Planning Clinic is held at the Hospital.

Health Centre and Dental Clinic

These are provided by the Somerset County Council at 54 Summerland Avenue, Minehead.

Ambulance Facilities

These facilities are provided by the Somerset County Council with ambulances stationed in Minehead.

Nursing Homes

There are four nursing homes in the district providing care for the aged and sick.

Old Persons Home

An Old Persons Home is provided by the Somerset County Council at Hilbury, Martlet Road, Minehead. Work on extending the building was commenced in August 1966.

Work on the erection of 17 Old Persons Dwellings with Warden accommodation was commenced in 1966 with County Council aid.

HYGIENE AND SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT

General

The number of inspections and visits made to various premises in the district was 2,162 and are detailed below:-

Abattoir	..	..	..	..	504
Food premises	..	..	..	..	334
Rodent control	..	..	..	..	355
Housing	..	..	..	..	177
Water supplies	..	..	..	..	64
Public Health	..	..	..	..	211
Infectious Disease	..	..	..	..	-
Offices, Shops, etc.	..	..	..	..	517

Housing

The total number of dwellings in the district is 2,903. During the year there were no houses erected by the Local Authority; 65 were erected by Private Enterprise and 1 house was closed.

The total number of applicants for Council houses at the end of the year was 125.

There was no case of overcrowding reported during the year.

Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1st April, 1945 to 31st Dec., 1966				Housing Programme for 1966	
By Local Authority 255		By Private Enterprise 421		-	
No. of permanent dwellings in District as at 31.12.65 (a)	Gained from conversions and erected during 1966 (b)	Total (a) + (b)	Less houses demolished closed etc. during year	No. of permanent dwellings in district as at 31.12.66	
				L.A.	P.E.
L.A. 359	-	359	-	359	-
P.E. 2,480	65	2,545	1	-	2,544
TOTAL 2,839	65	2,904	1	2,903	

Improvement Grants

A. Discretionary

No applications were received during the year.

B. Standard

Number of applications (a) received 11

(b) approved 9

Number of houses where Standard Amenities have been provided .. 11

Number of applications approved in respect of owner/occupiers .. 9

C. Substandard houses

A total of 353 houses have been inspected regarding the provision of standard amenities: 130 houses were found to lack some of the amenities, 111 were found to be without baths, 52 without hot water, 112 without wash hand basins, 5 without proper sinks and 51 without larders. The attention of the owners and occupiers was drawn to the improvement grants available under the Housing Acts.

Water Supplies

The supply of water to the town is undertaken by the West Somerset Water Board. There are six sources of supply with Nutscale supplying the bulk of the water to the town and the other sources are from Broadwood, Longwood, Periton, Middlecombe and Moor Brake. All the sources, except Moor Brake which is from a borehole, are collected from land springs. All the supplies are chlorinated.

Results of Samples taken for analysis

Raw water				Treated water			
Bacteriological		Chemical		Bacteriological		Chemical	
Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory
22	22	8	..	35	2	-	-

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b29801862>

The two unsatisfactory samples of treated water were found to be due to temporary failure of the chlorinating plant at the time of sampling. Repeat samples were satisfactory.

The supply of water was adequate during the year. Complaints have been made from time to time regarding the discolouration of the water which is due to the soft water corroding the iron mains. Frequent flushing of the mains was carried out by the Water Board.

Sewerage

Work on the new Eastern Area Relief Sewer and the installation of a comminutor on the western area main sewer commenced in November. The work, when completed, should overcome the flooding nuisance in the Marshfield Road, Hayfield Road and Ponsford Road areas, and also alleviate to a considerable extent the pollution of the beach.

Refuse Disposal

Although planning permission has been granted for a refuse tip and pulveriser on the Alcombe Marshes, no action has yet been taken because of the weight of public opinion in Alcombe against it. The Council are now considering alternative sites and meanwhile tipping is still continuing at Quay West.

Rodent Control

One part-time operator is employed to carry out the treatment of premises. Dwellinghouses are not charged for this service but the whole cost of treating business premises is recovered. During the year 75 properties were found to be infested with rats and 1 property with mice. No infestations of the sewers were found.

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises

Premises	Number Registered	Number of persons Employed
Offices	48	666
Retail Shops	111	1,060
Wholesale Depts.	2	16
Catering Establishments	15	834
Fuel Storage Depots	-	-
TOTALS	176	2,576

Factories

Particulars of premises registered under the Factories Acts 1937 to 1959 and the inspections made are as follows:-

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health:-

	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	6	6	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ..	40	37	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	46	43	-	-

2. Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Found	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted
		Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	2	2	-	-	-
Overcrowding ..	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature ..	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation ..	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors ..	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes ..	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work) ..	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	2	2	-	-	-

3. Outwork

	No. of out-workers in August list required by section 110(1)(c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
Wearing) Making apparel) etc.	2	-	-	-	-	-
Cleaning and washing	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	2	-	-	-	-	-

Swimming Pools

There are three swimming pools in Minehead. The Lido, Warren Road is privately owned, and is filled with sea water; two are in the Holiday Camp and are filled with fresh water from the Camp supply. The treatment adopted to maintain their purity is re-circulation, filtration and automatic chlorination.

Samples are taken frequently to ensure that the degree of chlorination is maintained and there is no trace of bacterial infection. Results of the tests indicated that in all the pools a safe bathing water was maintained.

Holiday Camp

The Camp catered for approximately 140,000 people during the summer season. The standard of hygiene caused some concern and representations were made by the Council to the owners. Officials from the Ministry of Health visited the Camp in August and a list of remedial works and suggested improvements were sent to the owners.

INSPECTION OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES

The general standard of cleanliness of all food premises in the town was satisfactory and only minor informal action needed to be taken in a few cases.

The number of premises in the district are as follows:-

Abattoir	1	Fried Fish Shops	3
Bakehouses	0	Fruiterers & Greengrocers ..	10
Bakers' Shops	4	Grocers & Confectioners ..	34
Butchers	6	Holiday Camp	1
Cafes	16	Hostels	1
Chemists	5	Hotels with Restaurants ..	9
Clubs, etc.	8	Hotels, Residential	38
Canteens	2	Licensed Premises	9
Church Halls	6	Pie Factory	1
Dairies	1	Restaurants	8
Dairy Shops	2	School Kitchens	4
Fishmongers	2	Snack Bars	2

Ice Cream

One property is registered for the manufacture and sale of ice cream and 55 premises for the sale of ice cream.

Meat

There is one privately owned abattoir in the district supplying meat for their own sales.

Carcases inspected and condemned:

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	344	-	20	2,447	1,018	-
Number inspected	344	-	20	2,447	1,018	-
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	1	3	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	29	-	-	19	36	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with diseases other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	8.4%	-	5.0%	0.9%	3.5%	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	3	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	0.3%	-
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for:-	All animals					
(a) Tuberculosis	33					
(b) Cysticercosis	-					
(c) Other	662					
Total (in lbs.) condemned	695					

Food Condemned

Meat and meat products	..	..	..	128 tins
Bacon	..	..	..	60 lbs.
Vegetables	..	..	..	16 tins
Fruit	..	..	..	49 lbs. and 34 tins
Soups	..	..	..	3 tins

In addition to the duties under the Public Health and Food and Drugs Acts, the Public Health Inspector is responsible for duties under the Shops Acts, Young Persons Employment Acts, Petroleum Acts, Waste Food Orders and carries out duties under the Building Regulations and Town and Country Planning Acts.

During the season the population increases with visitors to approximately 25,000.

One part-time technical assistant is employed to assist the Public Health Inspector.

In conclusion, I should like to thank Mr. Symes, your Public Health Inspector, and Mr. Burgess, your Clerk, for the help and courtesy they have given me after Dr. Bain's death. In particular, I must make it clear that most of this Report has been prepared by Mr. Symes and it reflects creditably on the work he has carried out in the area.

A. PARRY JONES, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

County Hall,
Taunton.

Tel. Taunton 3451

